

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 013407

EXDIS

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK CHUNG-HEE

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF JANUARY 17, 1978 LETTER FROM
PRESIDENT CARTER TO PRESIDENT PARK CHUNG-HEE. PLEASE
DELIVER. SIGNED ORIG;NAL BEING POUCHED.

2. BEGIN TEXT. DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: SUCCESSFUL NEGOTI-
ATION OF THE AGREEMENTS SETTING CONDITIONS FOR
MR. TONGSUN PARK TO PROVIDE TESTIMONY IN THE UNITED STATES
CONSTITUTES AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD TOWARD SOLUTION OF A
NETTLESOME PROBLEM WHICH HAS RISEN BETWEEN OUR TWO
COUNTRIES DURING THE PAST YEAR. I WISH TO CONVEY TO YOU
MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION FOR THE DIFFICULT DECISIONS
WHICH THIS SITUATION HAS POSED FOR YOU AND THE UNDERSTANDING
AND COOPERATION YOU, FOREIGN MINISTER PARK, AND OTHERS IN
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YOUR GOVERNMENT HAVE SHOWN IN THE CONDUCT OF THE NEGOTIA-
TIONS. THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE WILL HELP TO
REASSERT THE CLIMATE OF CLOSE COOPERATION AND FRIENDSHIP
THAT HAS CHARACTERIZED OUR RELATIONS. I AM HOPEFUL THAT
THROUGH MR. CIVILETTI'S PRESENCE IN SEOUL WE WILL BE ABLE
TO BEGIN THE LONG DELAYED PROCESS TO PUT THIS MATTER TO
REST. THERE WILL BE FURTHER DIFFICULTIES, BUT IF WE APPROACH

THEM IN THE SAME SPIRIT WE APPROACHED THE RECENT

NEGOTIATIONS, I AM SURE WE WILL OVERCOME THEM.

I HAVE ALSO NOTED THE ACTIONS TAKEN IN DECEMBER BY YOUR GOVERNMENT IN RELEASING CERTAIN EMERGENCY MEASURE PRISONERS, INCLUDING SEVERAL CONNECTED WITH THE MYONGDONG DECLARATION MADE IN SEOUL IN MARCH, 1976. THIS WAS AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN THE INTEREST OF HUMAN RIGHTS. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE FURTHER STEPS THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD, I SHOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY RESPECT FOR THE DECISION YOU HAVE TAKEN. FULFILLMENT OF THE SHARED DEMOCRATIC IDEALS OF OUR PEOPLE WILL BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE POSSIBLE INSURANCE FOR STRENGTHENING THE CLOSE BONDS BETWEEN OUR NATIONS.

I ALSO WANT TO REAFFIRM THE INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN CONTINUING TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA TOWARD OUR COUNTRIES' DURABLE OBJECTIVES. OUR JOINT EFFORTS WILL BE VITAL TO CONTINUED PEACE AND SECURITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA, AND I HAVE CONSEQUENTLY BEEN MOST ENCOURAGED BY THE RESPONSIBLE UNDERSTANDING REACHED BY OUR RESPECTIVE MILITARY AND DEFENSE OFFICIALS REGARDING MEASURES TO COMPENSATE FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF UNITED STATES GROUND COMBAT FORCES. I WISH TO ASSURE YOU THAT WE SHALL MAKE EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT TO

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OBTAIN CONGRESSIONAL ENDORSEMENT OF THESE UNDERSTANDINGS.

CHANGES IN ASIA AND PARTICULARLY THE RAPID AND DYNAMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA WILL CALL FOR CONTINUING EFFORTS FROM OUR GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLES TO MAKE NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS WHILE KEEPING OUR SHARED AND ENDURING GOALS BEFORE US. TO MEET THE CHALLENGES AHEAD, I AM HOPEFUL THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO COOPERATE EVEN MORE CLOSELY IN THE FUTURE ON ALL ISSUES OF MUTUAL CONCERN. SINCERELY, JIMMY CARTER. END TEXT.

3. WE DO NOT HAVE IN MIND PUBLIC RELEASE OF THE LETTER.
CHRISTOPHER

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